

Shawn M. Morse
Chairman, Albany County Legislature
112 State Street
Albany, NY 12207

December 18, 2015

Chairman Wheeler
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

I hope this letter finds you well. I write to you in support of bringing competition to America's broadband market as it relates to special access lines, which connect Albany County residents to our community organizations and businesses.

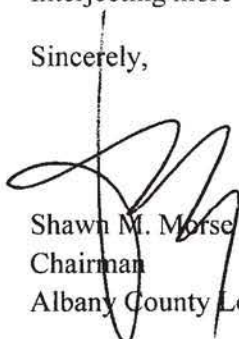
As Chairman of the Albany County Legislature and incoming Mayor for the City of Cohoes, I know firsthand the importance of making sure our businesses and community organizations have access to fast, reliable Internet service to conduct their daily activities. Whether it's one of our renowned hospitals or leading universities, a major global company or a small business, a dependable broadband connection is critical to our local economy. However, access isn't the only important thing to consider. There's also cost—and there is a hidden cost factor that weighs heavily on our ability to innovate and provide the services necessary to the people of Albany County.

Within the architecture of our broadband connections are special access lines that are a critical link that, due to a lack of competition, costs businesses and consumers across our county millions of dollars every year. These special access lines connect consumers to the businesses, institutions, and services we all interact with on a daily basis. When competition is limited at such a critical juncture, the companies controlling these lines are able to charge exorbitant fees to those who use—and depend on—these lines. There simply is not enough competition at this point in the infrastructure of broadband to protect consumers from steep pricing or anticompetitive terms in contracts.

The Federal Communications Commission has spent a considerable amount of time studying the impact of these special access fees. Starting in 2005, the FCC examined the lack of competition and how this affects the overall performance of our nation's broadband infrastructure. Given the importance of broadband's role in our economy, deep study is warranted, but after a decade of studying this problem, now is the time for the FCC to act.

The people of Albany County deserve to have access to fast, reliable and affordable broadband. Interjecting more competition into the market is a great way to provide these benefits.

Sincerely,



Shawn M. Morse
Chairman
Albany County Legislature